1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

over her from the roof, and she has to catch some and drink it. In some villages, again, if a man marries a widow or another man's wife, the woman must stand below the eaves with a *bassia latifolia* leaf on her head. The Waddai pours water and rice-beer from the roof, all over her, and after this she can enter her new home. When Oyami Anda of Bara Harmamunda married a girl for whom a Lamana'i youth had already been engaged, he had to stand with his rival's brother under the eaves of his house for a ceremony 'to make them forget enmity'. Anda's right hand was placed below the other's right hand, both having the palms upward. In front of them the Waddai made a heap of rice and set an arrow upright in it. He climbed on the roof and poured water over the hands of the two men who allowed it to flow down the arrow and over the rice. Afterwards Anda gave a pig and two fowls to the dispossessed Lamana'i as an offering to the latter's *kanal*. Had this ceremony not been performed, Anda—so he believed—would have suffered from a watery swelling of the body. 823

Page 262. Marias of both kinds are exceptionally virtuous in their sexual lives. Venereal disease is almost unknown, except in the vicinity of the few schools. Several old men have assured me—and I believe them—that since marriage they had had no other woman than their own wives. Love-charms and erotic stimulants are not much in demand and are not approved. At Molasnar there was a Naiko who was said to be making some sort of living by selling love-potions to the Marias; he used to administer them in liquor or tobacco and once a woman took one of them she would follow her lover everywhere 'like a pet dog'. But a Maria said, 'If I bring a girl in this way, my store of rice will grow less for such a union is not a yoking of the house of Mahapurub, and the girl will probably leave me after a time.' Vetti Muda of Dhurli described how when he was a young man (he must have been born about 1870), he used to take a regular diet of monkey's flesh. 'As a result I became very strong and active and could hop from tree to tree like a monkey. Once when I was going through the forest a monkey slipped from the overhanging branch of an ebony tree and was killed by the fall. I cut off its organ and roasted and ate it, with the result that I became so potent that I needed four wives at once.' But it is characteristic of the Maria—as against, for example, the ordinary Gond, Pardhan or Baiga—that he should have used the word 'wives'. 832

Page 269, *line* 27. Grigson has recorded 2 Hill Maria folk-tales. In my *Folk-Tales of Mahakoshal* I give 5 Bison-horn Maria, 37 Muria and 13 Kuruk stories, some of which are probably known also to the Hill Marias, for they were recorded in villages 538

THE COURSE OF MURIA LIFE: YOUTH

but for the fact that the omen can also be bad. If the members of a betrothal party hear a monkey cough, they return home. 787

A tiger or leopard. A symbol of power.

A mango tree. This is lucky because mango leaves are used to decorate the marriage-booth.

A bear. Another symbol of power. The bear is generally looked on as very potent, and its male member is used as an aphrodisiac. [832]

A blue sambhar.

A woman carrying a full pot—though in some villages it is thought unlucky to see any kind of pot.

When a sparrow says *pitik pitik* it means the carriers of officials on tour are coming; if it says *picha picha*, it means they are going somewhere else and all is well.

BAD OMENS

An usir bird crying *kichir-kichir* on the right.

The cry of the kiddari bird on the right, saying '*Kiddarr*, don't go, don't go'.

A crow crying *kaw kaw*, eat, eat! Its tail points towards something dead for the vultures to eat.

A snake across the path. A very natural warning of danger.

A woman carrying an empty pot or going to the river with a bundle of dirty clothes.

Anyone throwing away ashes or rubbish.

A plantain tree, for its leaves are placed on a bier and in a grave.

A peacock.

A mongoose.

A rat.

A lizard. If one crosses your path, you should catch it and burn it to ashes.

In some villages, a cat.

A hare.

Thursday and Saturday are unlucky days, on which important work should not be started.

If the omens are favourable, the father of the bridegroom, with two or three relatives carrying several bottles of the best liquor, set out for the bride's house. 584 When they reach their destination they sit down in the court, and presently the girl's father says, 'Have you come on any business?' They answer, 'We hear that a flower has blossomed in your house; we have come to pluck it'. 'Why do you want to pluck it?' asks the girl's father. 'So that we may stick it in our hair.' 'Have you seen the omens on the way?' asks the girl's father. 'Yes, and they were good to us.'[1]

If the parents are willing they now usually ask the girl her opinion. If she refuses, they tell the visitors that the flower is not for plucking, but if she

[1] W. G. Archer has made a candid study of these symbolic dialogues during marriage negotiations (op. cit., pp. 147ff and *Man in India*, Vol. XXIII (1943), pp. 147ff.). The flower symbolism does not seem to be used by the Uraon, but Russell and Hiralal notice it for the Kond (op. cit., Vol. III, pp. 467f) and give some charming sentences used by the Turi. 'I hear that a sweet-scented flower has blossomed in your house and I have come to gather it.' To which the bride's father may reply, 'You may take my flower, if you will not throw it away when its sweet scent is gone'. (Ibid., Vol. IV, p. 392.) The same symbolism is known to the Kharia and I have recorded its use among the Bison-horn Maria, the Kuruk and the Dhurwa in Bastar.

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
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301 The cowrie belt is almost unknown, but the chelik carry strings of cowries, bells, beads and tobacco-pouches at the waist.

In this area, the girls have either floppy brass *pairi* slipping down over the heels, or the thick heavy brass *tin-kor* above the ankles.

Finally, in the extreme east of Kondagaon, the chelik recapture something of the aesthetic attractiveness of the Jhoria. Once more elaborate necklaces of small red and blue beads appear; a head-band of cowries and black sago palm fibre is often worn (Fig. 89). The chelik's turban is specially attractive: 291 it is tied straight round into a box with one flap hanging over the top, the other falling behind. The boys themselves attach pretty fringes of pink, mauve and red tassels to these flaps.

For protection against rain, all the Muria make large round hats of leaves placed between a double bamboo framework, and long shields of the same material to hang from their shoulders. In a few villages near the Abujhmar they make the *lavali*-cloak of strips of retted bark characteristic of the Hill Maria.

II. Hair-dressing

302 The hair has the greatest emotional and artistic significance for the Muria. You may have the most beautiful features, the fairest colour, the finest figure, ●832 but if the hair is badly dressed you will not be thought attractive.

Care of his hair is the first and simplest service that a motiari can render 302 to a chelik; it is during the hair-combing in the evening that friendships become 515 intimate and proposals are made; wherever she is, in camp for a marriage or festival, resting in the heat of the day while working on the roads, or just 524 sitting in the house, a girl takes any chance she can of cleaning a boy's head, and examining it for lice. 'the thousand babies housed in a dry tree', 'the black cows that live in the thick forest, bothering everyone and drinking red water', 'the tigers that breed so quickly in the jungle'. She catches them with the end of her comb, or with her fingers, and kills them with thumb and forefinger. 'Ten went to hunt', says the riddle, 'but two did the killing.'

302 The chelik keep their hair fairly long. A straight fringe is cut across the forehead, and from the parting above it the hair is brushed back and tied in a bun usually covered by the turban. Some of the Muria living under the shadow of the Abujhmar follow the Hill Maria custom of shaving the whole head except for a patch on the crown which is carefully combed back and tied in a knot.

The chelik cut and trim their hair once every month or so, when the motiari who comb it tell them to. They cut and shave each other's heads with small razors made by the village Lohar. The motiari keep their boys closely shaven as to their chins, but they seem to like a good moustache. There is no other reason for shaving: the Muria, except those who have begun to imitate Hindu customs, do not shave at funerals or other religious occasions.

Girls do not cut their hair. They part it down the centre, and very carefully smooth it down and back. Behind the head they wind it over the small wooden blocks called *kunjar halla* (Fig. 91) which are carved for them by the chelik, and tuck it in underneath, fixing it in place with the *kunjar kota*, beautifully made wooden pins (Fig. 90)—also the gifts of chelik—to which are often attached bunches of cowries, coloured wool or strings of beads.

Both boys and girls treat their hair with oil, generally oil specially expressed by a motiari, a mother or sister. Many Muria now carry little bazaar mirrors which they constantly use.

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§31 §39 came to cut it off. The man grasped his penis with his hand, but that was all he could save. The women cut it off and it is now only a handsbreadth long.[1]

Another version of the tale, however, connects the disappearance of the long penis with the Vagina Dentata legend.

> In the old days there were teeth far back in the vagina. One day when the long penis went in, the teeth cut it and all that remained was a stump of its present length. Angry at this, the man brought a rice-husker and broke off the teeth. In those days the penis itself was covered with thorns; it stood up like a semur tree. But there were no thorns at the root. The thorny part was cut off, and the smooth part remains to this day.[2]

In this mythical past it was man, not woman, who was subject to a menstrual period.

> Formerly men had to live outside their houses every month. They used to tie hollow bamboos over the penis to catch the blood. One day a girl saw this and laughed at the man. He pulled the bamboo off and threw it at her.[3] Since then women have suffered this flowing of the blood instead of men.

III. Erotic Attractiveness

§32 I found it very difficult to get the Muria to give any clear account of what they meant by beauty. They are always moved by the loveliness of natural scenery, but they are not very articulate and find it hard to express themselves except when the words of a song or proverb provide them with a ready means of utterance. The following Chitkul Pata from Amakot, for example, reveals not a little aesthetic appreciation.

Jiläng jäpar bandär!	How beautiful the lake!
Bandär soba bäräng?	Why is the lake so beautiful?
Bandär soba päri,	Lovely are the banks of the lake,
Bandär soba yero.	Lovely the waters of the lake.
Yero soba minur,	Lovely are the fish in the water.
Minur soba bäräng?	To the fish what is lovely?
Minur soba sila.	To the fish the water-reeds are lovely.
Pärar soba bäräng?	On the bank what is lovely?
Pärar soba marka,	On the bank the mango trees,
Kändi udo marka,	The mango's spreading branches,
Waliya wäto gorga.	And the palm trees everywhere.

In human beings the Muria seem to admire liveliness, animation, vigour more than perfection of colour or feature. They apply their universal test of hard work not only to assess a person's morals, but even his erotic attractiveness. 'However beautiful the face, one's eyes turn aside disgusted from a loafer.'

[1] The Bison-horn Maria attribute this incident to a man named Baikesa and say that he himself cut off his long penis through shame when it touched a woman not his wife by mistake. He died to death and was buried in a sitting posture. He is still honoured as Baikesa Pen with a pile of stones in many villages.

[2] But the Bison-horn Maria of Dugali said that the penis became short because in olden times the Mahara had none at all and went to Gaja Bhimal to beg for one. He cut off the long part from the Maria, but they held the stems in their fists. This is why the Maria have nothing to do with the Mahara for fear they lose the rest of the organ.

[3] For this reason, it is said, the Bison-horn Maria pelt a girl with mud at her first menstruation.

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The Muria do not seem able to analyse a face and say whether, for example, thick lips or a snub nose is repugnant to them. I have often showed them the frontispiece of Grigson's *Maria Gonds of Bastar*, which depicts a handsome Maria youth sitting with his wife. Everywhere the comment was the same; the couple had beautiful ornaments, but they were not sitting properly. Nothing was said about their features. And in fact, whenever I have discussed this subject, both chelik and motiari talk of the clothes and ornaments of a person rather than of feature or carriage. Here, for example, are some typical descriptions of attractive chelik given by motiari to my wife. 'He is always washing and doing his hair; his clothes are white and clean; he knows how to stand and sit [that is, he has good manners]. Even though he is thirty years old, we all love the Mansai, for he is never dirty.' That was in Palki; at Binjhli the favourite chelik was the Belumdar. 'He is of fair colour, his hair is curly, his face is always clean, he has beautiful ear-rings, his clothes are always white.' Not, it will be noted, 'he has beautiful ears' but 'he has beautiful ear-rings'. The Saliya of the same ghotul was also greatly admired; he was indeed a most handsome and charming youth. 'He is as clean as a State servant.'

In Markabera the motiari said: 'It's the ornaments that matter. It's the hair and the necklaces and the combs that matter. He must have all the ornaments, round his head, at his ears, about his neck, at his waist: how beautiful he looks then! He must have combs in his hair, and clean clothes. Let the nose be as it is, let the eyes be as they are, let the mouth be as it is; they were made by God and will be what they are. But we make the ornaments and with them a chelik can make himself as handsome as he wills.'

And indeed how handsome and delightful the chelik—especially the Jhoria chelik—can make themselves! When a boy is in love he borrows all he can, sticks feathers in his hair, covers himself with coloured beads, ties bunches of little bells at his waist. 'Then as he goes along, the bells jingle, and we motiari run out to see who is coming. "It's the Kotwar." "No, it's the Diwan." When she sees how beautiful he is, a motiari's mind rises for a boy.'

Nowhere do the chelik display their manly vigour, their agility, their sexual attractiveness to better advantage than in the Mandri dances. Some of the movements have a definitely sexual meaning, but all reveal the strength and energy of the drummers. It is said that the best lovers are those who use homemade wooden drums and not earthenware drums bought in the bazaar. It is considered that only a very ardent lover would go to the trouble of making a drum out of wood. 'Such men are strong and can break the horns of a deer.' Any girl will go to them rather than to those who are content with mere bazaar products. 'A chelik who can beat a wooden drum knows well how to beat a girl in love.'

In girls the chelik admire vitality and beauty, but expect them to be well-dressed and decorated. In Masora they said that the Malko was very pretty for 'she wears her cloth carefully, and always looks at her shadow to see if she is bearing herself well'. 'When we hear the *chalak-chalak* of a girl's anklets, we run to see who it is and whisper to each other, "Look, there she goes, how pretty she looks".' But they also expect a girl to be pretty in the Western and Hindu sense. I have noticed that the girls I myself thought worth photographing were those who received most attention from the chelik. The two favourite girls in Binjhli were the Silo and the Samaro; they were both small, slender, with rather delicate hands and feet, light-coloured, with bright attractive features, well-dressed hair ornamented with many combs, and plenty of necklaces. 'Their faces are always "ready" and their hair well-dressed.'

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●§32 In Markabera the most beautiful girl was considered to be the Malko, whose photograph appears in Plate CXII. She won her fame, I think, by her vitality and carriage rather than for any loveliness of feature. The Kotwarin of Kachora, who was universally acclaimed as the most attractive girl there, and who may also be seen in Plate CXII,[1] could hardly be called beautiful. But she was bubbling over with life and energy, and her dancing was wonderful.

Other girls, very beautiful to Western eyes, whose photographs adorn this book, the Jhelo of Pupgaon, the Nero of Tarhalli, the Malko of Koilibera, the Salko of Munjmeta, were obviously the ruling queens of their youthful courts. I noticed that each of them was a vigorous and active worker, a fact that contributed not a little to the chelik's admiration.

In Kokori the Muria gave what is very rare, a detailed description of a beautiful girl.

> Her legs and feet should not be too long; they should be neither thin nor fat. The toes must not be big or crooked. She should have a slim waist so that when she ties her cloth round it, buttocks and waist will be level. A long stomach is ugly; so are buttocks that stick out behind. The nose may be small, but not snub. A big head or ears, or fat cheeks, are ugly. When the hair is combed it should lie flat on the head. A girl must not be very tall. Her eyes should not be black, and she should never put lamp-black in them or she would look like a witch. The most important thing is that she should dress well and work well. If a girl wears a good cloth she looks sweet, but with lots of ornaments she is entrancing. Even an ordinary girl can be beautiful with proper ornaments. But, however sweet her face may be, if she is idle or slovenly, we think her ugly.[2]

In the songs there are not so many references to feminine beauty as one would expect. Indeed many of the songs, being sung antiphonally between chelik and motiari, indulge in taunts rather than flattery. Thus Gadakare Mode of Lingo's ghotul hardly sounds attractive to modern ears. 'She had a navel as big as a cart-wheel and a wild boar could roll over and over in her vagina. She looked like a sack of salt from Nandgaon.' The chelik are often described in equally unflattering terms.

But the songs do sometimes make reference to a quality in woman which they call *sapota*, meaning that all her physical characters are balanced and in proportion. Such a girl is neither tall nor short, fat nor thin; 'she has a straight nose without too long a space between its tip and her lips; she has straight hands and feet, a slim waist, round breasts that are not too large. Her eyes are dark and bright'. The songs also refer to a type of girl they call *jalmalko*, which seems to describe the way a girl carries herself. 'She struts about like a peacock with tail erect'—many motiari resemble the male rather than the female bird. A Tutumri Pata refers to a girl as *jalhona soka jalhonaina*, one who goes swinging her hips to attract the eyes of men. A *bai chikan khosa*, a girl with hair parted and combed with care, is always beautiful.[3]

[1] The caption in Plate CXII incorrectly gives this girl's village as Kongera.

[2] It will be of interest to compare these ideas with the estimate of classical Indian beauty made by Coomaraswamy. In the Rajasthani and Pahari paintings, he points out, are all the Hindu woman-ideals, both physical and spiritual. 'The heroine's eyes are large as any lotus flowers, her tresses fall in heavy plaits, her breasts are firm and high, her thighs are full and smooth, her hands like rosy flowers, her gait as dignified as any elephant's and her demeanour utterly demure.'—A. Coomaraswamy, *Rajput Painting* (Oxford, 1916), p. 8.

[3] Trench gives the expression *singri-mingri* for a well-dressed and ornamented girl; *kosamna* means 'pretty' and *sobhin* 'buxom'. Mitchell gives *sobano-kuwa* as meaning

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Although the Muria do not analyse the parts of the body or the face with the care given to this pleasant task by the more sophisticated Indian communities, they have a fully developed aesthetic tradition of the breast. This is natural in a people who but yesterday learnt to cover the upper part of their bodies with a cloth. Even now I have seen in many Muria houses girls husking rice or grinding grain without any upper cloth. When no strangers are about, they still, in the western areas, discard as many clothes as possible. The breasts, so often seen, are always admired. A boy, asked the age of a girl, will answer by showing with his open hands the size of her breasts. 'She may have breasts as big as a coconut, or they may be small as a lemon, but they are beautiful and we love them', said a chelik at Masora. 'A girl's beauty is in her breasts. But'—and this is an interesting point—'the breasts do not remain. After a child is born their loveliness departs. But always there are the shoulders; they never betray us.' In other words, sexual congress demands something to hold—'from holding comes joy indescribable'; in youth a chelik holds the breasts; later he holds the shoulders, and these never betray him, but go with him all his life.

There are many vivid similes for the breast, a whole vocabulary and system of classification, reminding one a little of Jayle's famous distinction of nine mammary types. As we might expect, several of the chelik's classifications are of small and immature breasts—the *paras dudo*, like half-formed gourds; the *benjri dudo*, like small brinjals at which the boys laugh saying, 'When will the brinjals in your garden be ripe?'; the *bondo-kukh dudo*, like little mushrooms; the *thaka dudo*, like small pots. The *kosa dudo* are compared to cocoons; they are the breasts of a girl only just mature; and the *urang kaskle dudo* are also immature and 'flat as dog-fleas'.

The breasts of the older motiari are finely developed. Such are the *gutta dudo*—'their youthful strength stands up like pegs'; the *kapa dudo*, the 'ripe brinjal which is fresh and firm'; the *kindri dudo*, of which it is said that 'even if she has five children they will keep their shape'; the *burka dudo*, the large hemispherical breasts of a faithful wife and loving mother; the *marka dudo*, or mango breasts; the magnificent *niral dudo*, 'tiger breasts', the best of all, hemispherical with well-marked areolae and a beautiful conical-tipped nipple, whose milk nourishes a child into a young tiger.

Less admired are the *kurbin dudo*, small with long nipples, called 'monkey breasts' in Mandla; the *dhodka* or *turka dudo*, another gourd breast but elongated and weaker which gives poor thin milk; the *chimni dudo*, with long nipples 'like the funnel of a country lamp'; and the *hind dhoti dudo*, the nipples of which are 'like the berries of the chhind shrub'. It is notable that in this group the breasts are classified according to the nipples.

The breasts of older women are the flat *hulta dudo*, the *herpunj dudo*, long as country shoes and the *tilko dudo* which 'flop down like dripping water', a description which recalls the expression in Betul Gondi—*dudukh ding-dong ailing*: 'her breasts are dangling like a blanket behind a cart'.[1]

'beauty', but this seems to mean simply 'good to see'. Ugliness is described with more animation. *Sika-arjal* means, in Betul, 'a shock-headed untidy person looking like a savage bear'. *Bahrdi kurusipen* mai is a 'fat-faced woman'. To call a man *Akkur* in Gondi means he is 'thin as a stick'. Mitchell gives *ojo* as meaning 'ugly' among the Bisonhorn Maria.

[1] Trumpf, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 58. Muria similes for the breast, which may be paralleled by those current among the Baiga (see *The Baiga*, pp. 343ff) must be almost unique for detail and imagination. The Greeks had their *dolia fabulosa*; the Arabs admired the pomegranate breast; the medieval German ideal was 'that the breasts should be high and rounded, like apples or pears, small and soft' (Havelock Ellis, *Sexual Selection*,

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●832 It is possible for an unattractive motiari to make herself beautiful by magic. She must go all alone in the middle of the night and fetch home the charred bone of a barren witch who has died on a Sunday and has been cremated on the same day. She must then sacrifice a chicken before the bone on seven successive Sundays, saying 'I have brought you to make me beautiful'. On the seventh Sunday she touches every part of her body with the bone 'and her beauty then knows no bounds'. It is not surprising that the majority of girls prefer to leave their natural charms as they are.

IV. The Approach to Tumescence

X883 832 Contrary to what the Peeping Tom, be he chaprasi or social reformer, supposes, the real difficulty of ghotul life is not an excess of libido, but a deficiency that might well wreck it. For the essence of such a life is that it should be, as Milton defined poetry, 'simple, sensuous and passionate', that it should be redeemed from mediocrity and degradation by enthusiasm and a fine sexual vitality. But not only does Muria libido appear to be generally rather weak, but the special conditions of life in the ghotul tend still further to depress it. On this point, Havelock Ellis has the final word.

> Courtship, he says, 'is the process by which powerful sensory stimuli proceeding from a person of the opposite sex gradually produce the physiological state of tumescence, with its psychic concomitant of love and desire, more or less necessary for mating to be effected. But between those who have been brought up together from childhood all the sensory stimuli of vision, hearing, and touch have been dulled by use, trained to the calm level of affection, and deprived of their potency to arouse the erethistic excitement which produces sexual tumescence.'[1]

Havelock Ellis is here discussing the origin of the horror of incest, and arguing against Westermarck's theory of a special instinct that makes sexual intercourse between near kin an impossibility. But his words are equally applicable to the ghotul, where boys and girls grow up together under conditions of far greater intimacy than do most brothers and sisters. Chelik and motiari, like brothers and sisters, 'in relation to each other have at puberty already reached that state to which old married couples by the exhaustion of youthful passion and the slow usage of daily life gradually approximate'.[2] This would, of course, be somewhat overstated as applied to the ghotul, but it is not altogether wide of the truth. In any one ghotul the boys and girls have lived

p. 147); Chaucer describes a beautiful woman 'with bettokes breds and bretes roundo and hye'; the *Song of Songs*, through the Authorised Version, popularised among English readers two lovely similes—'Thy two breasts are like two young roes that are twins, which feed among the lilies'; 'Thy breasts shall be as clusters of the vine'—echoed by Sidney with his 'O breast in which two white sheep swell in pride'. Wycherley (*The Country Wife*) uses the orange simile, but a modern poet, Dylan Thomas, speaks, less romantically, of 'bagpipe-breasted ladies'. We must be content with one more comparison from a Lao poem, translated by E. Powys Mathers.

> Whether the breasts be as slight as citrons
> We would make love,
> Whether the breasts be as great as pumpkins
> As wrinkled as elephants,
> As soft as cooked rice.

See also Verrier Elwin, *Folk-songs of Chhattisgarh* (Bombay, 1949), pp. 388.

[1] Havelock Ellis, op. cit., pp. 206f. Compare Westermarck, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 192f.

[2] Havelock Ellis, op. cit., p. 208.

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together all their lives and their capacity for erethistic excitement is naturally dulled.

But the Muria have the wit to put this fact to the best of uses and yet preserve their psychic capacity for sexual happiness. The calm level of affection—almost as of mature experience—which they achieve while yet in their teens, expresses itself in the wonderful harmony and fellowship of the best ghotul, the general diffused affection which leaves no room for jealousy and possessiveness. As anyone who has stayed for a time in a good ghotul must notice, the boys and girls form a compact, loyal, friendly little republic; they are all evidently very fond of each other; there is a large, generous, corporate romance uniting them. They do really seem to live in a sort of glow; the superb light of cleopatrine passion is absent, but so is the harsher glare of excited grasping lust. In the soft diffused glow of corporate affection, a girl decorates herself not only for one boy, but for all the boys and for the ghotul's honour and delight. The boys drum and dance to please their special lovers, it is true, but also to excite and gratify the entire company of motiari.

But ideal as it may sound, such a situation has its dangers. A diffused affection does not promote sexual potency. And Muria, and indeed all aboriginal tradition, sets little value on unconsummated love. Without it there would be no harmony or content; everything would deviate. The very thing that the reformers and puritans most deplore in the ghotul is what keeps it clean and healthy. But to preserve this superbly natural life is not easy.

The ghotul routine might have been planned by some great erotic genius, so admirably is it devised to ensure tumescence whenever that may be desired. So apt is the ghotul method, so finely adapted to its purpose, so stimulating and tonic in its effect that were it possible to send jaded husbands and wives away from civilisation for treatment to the Muria, I do not believe one of them would return uncured.

'So far', says Havelock Ellis again, 'from the instinct of tumescence naturally needing to be crushed, it needs, on the contrary, in either sex to be submitted to the most elaborate and prolonged processes in order to bring about those conditions which detumescence relieves. A state of tumescence is not normally constant, and tumescence must be obtained before detumescence is possible. The whole object of courtship, of the mutual approximation and caresses of two persons of the opposite sex, is to create the state of sexual tumescence.'[1]

How then is tumescence achieved under the rather unfavourable circumstances of ghotul life? The buildings and surroundings of the dormitory are a powerful stimulant. These little huts, rich with tender and romantic association, the waving forest trees around, the stillness of the night, perhaps a moon, the bright fire in the courtyard, the tinkling bells tied to a chelik's waist, the distant song of motiari on their way—cannot fail to make the hearts of boy and girl beat faster.

The routine of a ghotul evening is a carefully devised preparation for intercourse, a tonic to deficient libido. First of all, the sense of touch is vividly stimulated by the combing and massaging. Havelock Ellis quotes Bain as saying that 'touch is both the alpha and omega of affection', and he stresses 'tenderness' as the characteristic 'quality of affection which is founded directly on sensations of touch'.[2] This exactly describes what I have often noticed about the motiari's technique of massage. Beginning with great vigour,

[1] Havelock Ellis, *Analysis of the Sexual Impulse*, p. 33.
[2] Havelock Ellis, *Sexual Selection*, p. 6.

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almost roughly, it grows gentler and gentler until at last the girl's hands are moving caressingly, tenderly over the arms and bodies of their boys, rousing affection and stirring with every gesture new desire.

The use of the comb to titillate the skin has a similar effect: Muria boys and girls are susceptible to tickling, which has been described as 'the most intellectual mode of touch sensation and that with the closest connexion with the sexual sphere'. As the motiari dresses her chelik's hair and with her comb gently tickles and stimulates his back and arms, he responds by fondling her breast, by stroking her legs (which are usually placed round his body; as she massages, the girl often grips the boy's waist between her knees) or by boldly tickling her. Certain types of massage are specially exciting. The girl stands above the boy, bending over him, and rubs downwards, passing her hands over the stomach down to the specifically erogenous region which thus receives a powerful tonic; sometimes she massages the legs, pushing her hands right up to the groin.

It is curious that with all this, the kiss as a means of sensory excitement is but little used.[1] It is not unknown—far from it—but it is something that goes in fashions; a ghotul discovers it, as at More Berma, and then everybody kisses. But even then the kiss does not appear to be on the lips, nor does the tongue play any part; for the Muria the kiss is a highly concentrated form of massage with the lips upon the skin. Boys kiss the face and breasts; I have never heard of *fellatio* being practised, but it may be—the description of it causes no offence.

After touch, smell is a powerful stimulant. Charming is the freshness of the open hill and forest, but more charming still, say the chelik, is the smell of perspiration, oil, wet earth, a suggestion of urine, all tempered by the bitter-sweet wood-smoke, which is regarded as the peculiar aroma of the ghotul.[2] The ghotul smell is unforgettable; it is not unpleasant even to a stranger's nostrils; and boys have told me that they have found it a strong sexual stimulant. 'The smell of the wood-smoke in a girl's hair, how exciting it is!' exclaimed a chelik at Markabera. So is the smell of the cow-shed clinging to boy or girl, a clean healthy smell with good associations. At Temrugaon the boys loved the scent of the marigolds that the motiari put in their hair and declared them to be their favourite flower.

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No artificial scents are used, and this means that both boys and girls have to be very careful about bodily cleanliness; an unpleasant vaginal odour is mentioned as specially inhibiting to desire; there is a saying—*muh sundri gând gandri*—however beautiful the face, if a girl has a dirty body, she will not be admired.

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But 'the most usual method of attaining tumescence', says Havelock Ellis, 'a method found among the most various kinds of animals, from insects and birds to man—is some form of the dance'.[3] 'It is everywhere the instinctive object of the male, who is very rarely passive in the process of courtship, to assure by his activity in display, his energy or skill or beauty, both his own

[1] It is a commonplace of anthropology that primitive peoples do not kiss; I have always wondered how investigators can be so sure of this. The ordinary word in Gondi is *kutydon*, 'to kiss'. Trench says that the word as used in Betul—*kurdna*—means 'to kiss, of humans, to nose of dogs'. Ward gives *nahilla* as a Gondi word for kiss used in the Mandla District (*nâhâna* means 'to lick'). I also found the Muria using a word *kosnâ* which was said to mean 'kiss', but I am doubtful about this.

[2] The Uraon *dhumkuria* have a quite different smell, in which the odour of urine is much more prominent. The Bison-horn Maria again have a strong, and rather attractive, smell, not unlike the Savara but quite distinct from the Muria.

[3] Havelock Ellis, *Analysis of the Sexual Impulse*, p. 53.

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passion and the passion of the female. Throughout nature sexual conjugation only takes place after much expenditure of energy.'[1] And so the ghotul evening usually begins with vigorous dances and games, many of them frankly provocative of the sexual emotions. The splendid parade of the Mandri dance, the intimacies of the Hulki, the suggestiveness of some of the games are invaluable as a preparation for tumescence. There is a proverb *Rela rela bonde pela*—'If you start with singing Rela you end with the satisfaction of desire'. It must be noted that it is not only the chelik who by the energy of their display excite the motiari; the girls' games and dances are equally powerful stimulants. In one of these games, the girls bend forward, each holding a stick in her hand to represent a penis, and dance with jerky movements of the buttocks that closely simulate the sexual process. As they dance they sing,

Nân nân chingro,	Little little prawn hairs,
Bare lân hînia,	Very long thorn,
Kaha gai ho,	Where has he gone,
Nandpurihâr Râja?	The Nandpurihar Raja?

The 'little prawn hairs' are the pubic hairs and the long thorn is the penis of the chelik. In the Jhoria Endanna, the girls also sing songs about sexual congress.

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We have already seen, particularly in Chapter XI, something of the scope of sexual opportunity offered by the ghotul as also the limitations it imposes on the normal process of sexual selection. Under these conditions do the chelik and motiari really 'fall in love'? What happens to the tenderness of devotion, the tensions and despairs of passion, the idealizing of the adored object which is still, to the majority of Europeans, essential to any proper relationship between the sexes? Or does life in the ghotul, as Dalton said of the Uraon dormitory, 'sadly blunt all innate feelings of delicacy'?

It is possible that the Muria, in the diffused tenderness of corporate affection, in their simple and natural view of sexual congress, in their rational and realistic attitude to one another, have achieved something better than the sentimental raptures of the lover in the novelette 'sighing like furnace' for an impossible ideal.

Many chelik and motiari seem to pass through their ghotul period without any very passionate love-affairs, content and happy with the ghotul tradition of love. Others, in the course of their seven or eight ghotul years, experience one or two vivid and exciting adventures which may last only a few months and which interrupt but illuminate the general course of their less intense amours. Others again, of a different temperament, are always falling in love and out of it, coveting other cheliks' 'wives', arranging to meet girls outside in the forest or visiting them when the others are asleep. 'Love often makes us break the rules,' said a chelik at Kuutpadar.

For across the calm sea of unstrained, unfrustrated affection, there blow sudden gales and storms. A new girl comes to the village; a boy suddenly awakes to the charm of a motiari he has known for years; a chelik displays himself as a popular hero and draws every heart; little girls and boys grow up

[1] Havelock Ellis, *Analysis of the Sexual Impulse*, p. 52. The sex-dance of the subhuman primates 'consists of an erect swaggering waddle quite different from the usual mode of locomotion. No doubt its function is to intimidate and prepare the female for sexual submission to the dominant male.'—Clifford Allen, *The Sexual Perversions and Abnormalities* (Oxford, 1940), p. 27. See also H. Bingham, *The Sex Development in Apes* (Baltimore, 1928).

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pregnancy, intercourse should cease after the fifth month: there is unanimous testimony on this point. After childbirth—so many Muria claim—a husband does not approach his wife for one, or even two, years. 'He must not go to her till the child is weaned.' This may possibly be true of a few villages under strong Hill Maria influence, but even there it seems to me doubtful. There is certainly a desire, however, to space confinements properly and 'if you sow seed in wet ground, a harvest is certain'. But the ground dries long before this. 834

Elsewhere I have heard it said that 'when the *wife* feels an itching for it, she herself goes to lie with her husband'—an important point, in that it places the responsibility for resuming intercourse on the woman. In Alor, the Muria said that a period of six months was sufficient, in Chandabera that intercourse was resumed when the child first smiled. In Chameli the villagers spoke of a case where a child had died because the mother gave birth to another during the lactation period of the first. 'The child drank the milk of blood.'

These 'holidays' serve a valuable psychological, as well as a physiological, purpose. In the ghotul, where their close and constant contact might easily make chelik and motiari utterly weary of one another, life is frequently broken up. For months the chelik go to watch in the fields, and the motiari are alone in the ghotul. The menstruating girl is not only sexually taboo; she does not come to the ghotul at all—and is all the more welcome when she reappears. The arrangement that chelik and motiari should go on separate dancing expeditions is psychologically sound, as is proved by the enthusiastic welcome they receive on their return. 883X 833

VIII. Love-charms

In an atmosphere like that of the ghotul, where frustration and sexual anxiety are comparatively rare, the use of love-charms is less common than among other aboriginal people. But the Muria are acquainted with such charms and sometimes use them, though the results may not always be permanent. 'If I get a girl in this way,' said a Muria at Remawand, 'my store of rice grows less, for such a union is not a yoking of Mahapurub's house. The true yoking comes of its own accord.' It is said that 'girls won by magic run by deceit'. 883X 837

The charms are generally based on simple principles of sympathetic magic. For example, at Alor the Gaita said that the way to win a reluctant lover was to pursue a pair of *sarus* cranes. These cranes, as is well known, always go about in pairs, and it is said that if one of them dies its mate will quickly follow suit.

> When the cranes fly up into the air one or two feathers may fall. One of these must be caught before it reaches the ground. Then offer it liquor and a black chicken, burn it, tie the ashes in a little bundle to your waist and somehow or other touch the girl with it. Then you will love each other like a pair of cranes. But this is a dangerous charm for as the two cranes always die together so if the girl dies you will die too.

Another curious charm comes from Gorma.

> When you go to relieve yourself, wait till a pig comes along to eat your excreta. Leaving your cloth undone, jump on the pig and pull out a little hair from the back of its neck or forehead. Tie the hair in your cloth and do yourself up. Wait till a Sunday, and then push the

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girl you want with your left arm and she will follow you as a pig follows your excreta.

Here are some other charms.

Go to the Siraha and ask his help. Beg some of the ashes of the incense he has offered to the gods and some blessed rice. When you get a chance give this to your girl to eat and she will never leave you.

Catch a pair of sparrows and on a Sunday take them to a cross-roads and sacrifice them by cutting off their heads. Make two little holes in the ground side by side, put a head in each and cover them with earth. Leave them all night and the following morning go to examine them. If the female head has moved into the male hole, you will be successful. Now remove the heads and offer them liquor and a black chicken. Burn them and tie up the ashes in a bundle at your waist. Next Sunday, somehow or other touch your girl with the bundle without her knowing and she will come to you as the sparrow's head went to its mate.

On a Saturday go to the jungle and invite a *kari-bhulan* shrub to help you by sprinkling rice and liquor over it. Go next day and dig it up. If the roots are stuck together, you will know that all will be well. Take the roots home and get some aromatic leaves. Promise a goat to Lingo if you succeed.[1] Fry the roots and the leaves together, pound them up and mix a little in your girl's food without her knowing.

A similar charm is made of parasites growing on the bhansuli, bantga, kolicha-buta, gawai and phunder trees. They are collected and burnt. A black chicken is killed and its blood dropped upon them with the words, 'I give thee life to win me such and such a girl'. Then the ashes are tied up and the girl is touched with them in the usual way.

In Kolur village there was a Muria who claims that the tobacco in his pouch is so full of love-charms that he can win any girl he wants with it.

Two special types of charm must be mentioned. In Padbera there are stones which represent historic Muria who died fighting. These stones are regarded as very potent and boys or girls scrape a little of the stone to make charms. Once the Munshi (Mainu Uika) of the Bakulwahi ghotul got a little of this stone and offered it rice and liquor saying, 'I have brought you a gift, fulfil my desire and I will give you yet more'. Then he gave the scrapings in some tobacco to the Jhalko and the girl became so entranced that she eloped with him and they were married.

A similar custom attaches to the stone remains of Neng Mudial, about whom the Muria tell a romantic story:

Long ago there lived two brothers, Tande and Gunshi, at Chaurang village. Between them these two brothers had eight wives. They had an old servant called Neng Mudial. One night this old man by his love magic carried off all eight wives. He took them first to Kotpar village, then to a very beautiful spot near the junction of Bongapal, Badgai and Bandopal where he dug three tanks and prepared bricks to build a fort.

Now when the brothers Tande and Gunshi awoke in the morning and found their wives and their servant missing, they were filled with fury

[1] In Mandla, a lover promises a white goat to the Rai Lingo Hill if his suit succeeds.

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and went out to find them. They searched for many days and at last when they were almost weary of their chase, they discovered Neng Mudial near the pile of bricks for the great fort he hoped to make. Neng Mudial was sitting at his food and asked them to wait a moment; he would discuss matters when he had finished. But they were so angry that they cut off his left hand. Then they threw him on the ground and cut off his testicles and penis. They threw the testicles to Chandabera, where they turned into stone and may still be seen. They threw his penis to Ban-Chapai and it is there to this day. The old man himself turned into a stone. Then the brothers found their wives and killed them all and returned sadly to Chaurang, where they died and are worshipped even now.[1]

The cult of Neng Mudial is still maintained at Chandabera, Bandopal and Bongapal, and annual offerings are made to his stones. The chelik believe that if after offering sacrifices they scrape a little from the stone testicle or penis and give it to their girls, these will be as certainly enticed as were the wives of Tande and Gunahi.

Closely allied to the use of love-charms is that of some sort of aphrodisiac. The Muria generally believe that a meat diet is useful for this, and especially the virile organs of the bear or goat.

It sometimes happens that when a motiari has succeeded in humbling a boy, taunted him with his lack of vigour and rather conspicuously bestowed her favours elsewhere, he wants to be revenged upon her. In order to do this, he prepares a very powerful tonic according to this prescription:

> Find a two- or three-year-old *dodka* cucumber plant with a parasite on it. Climb up without throwing your shadow on it and pick a bit without using your nails. Burn it and tie the ashes in a little bundle. Keep it in the house where the shadow of a menstruous woman or witch will not fall on it. Then at the time of intercourse tie it on your wrist or elbow and your thing will be as large as the cucumber and you can humble any girl who has scorned you.

An interesting use of a love-charm was recorded at Kabonga. The Sirdar told us that shortly after marriage, he was planning to elope with the Salki whom he had loved as a chelik. 'But my wife made a love-charm, and I fell in love with my own wife, and forgot the Salki.'

IX. Impotence

Stekel begins his great work on *Impotence in the Male* with a solemn warning. 'In men love-inadequacy is increasing to an alarming degree, and impotence has come to be a disorder associated with modern civilization ... The percentage of relatively impotent men cannot be placed too high. In my experience, hardly half of all civilised men enjoy normal potency. Nowadays ejaculatio praecox is no longer a disorder; it is the regular accompaniment of civilization.'[2] Among the Muria, however, cases of impotence of any kind are extremely rare. It is, I think, possible to affirm this with confidence,

[1] For a somewhat similar legend of Nakti turned into stone, cf. *JBORS*, Vol. II, p. 214.

[2] W. Stekel, *Impotence in the Male* (English Translation, New York, 1930), p. 1. Compare also Dickinson's judgement. 'Our most grievous male problem of maladjustment is premature ejaculation and it is only second in disastrous effect to blundering technique'. —R. L. Dickinson, *Human Sex Anatomy* (London and Baltimore, 1933), p. 82.

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
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682 Not in Maria practice to ask a woman
674 for tobacco is a symbolic way of inviting her to sexual inter-
332 course, and when the boy asked his elder brother's widow to have congress with him, he was only demanding his right and when she refused it, he found the provocation, both to his pride and his desire, so great that he killed her.

000 Research, both by medical science and by anthropology, may in time reveal how far the apparently motiveless homicides of aboriginals can be explained as crimes of exhaustion and fatigue. Again and again a man kills his loved wife in a sudden explosion of temper and for no apparent cause. It is probable that in many cases the real reason is not alcoholic intoxication, but extreme fatigue.

A point that often troubles the Courts is the time-element in cases where provocation is pleaded as an excuse. It is often found that there is a lapse of some hours between the actual incident that gave provocation and the subsequent act of violence. It has too often been held that this lapse of time should deprive the accused of gaining the benefit from Exception 1 of Section 300 of the Indian Penal Code. But there can be little doubt that an aboriginal's intelligence does not work so quickly as that of a more sophisticated person, and even in matters of everyday life it often takes an appreciable time for an idea to take root and effect a result in his mind. Laubscher's analysis of the psychology of the Tembu Negroes of South Africa is of some importance here. The Tembu, he says,

> Is not by nature blood-thirsty, but his aggressive instinctive or pugnacious propensities are excitable, easily roused and explosive. His aggressive libido flows outwards, becomes readily externalized, and sudden impulsive assaults, often fatal, are not uncommon. Careful study of the emotional reactions of the participants in stick fights, of course initially playfully performed for my benefit, has shown me how quickly and explosively the native loses his temper and retaliates with death-dealing blows at his opponent. Fatal blows are only avoided by the defensive skill of the opponent. Aggressive impulses are quickly evoked, although there is no apparent bad feeling after such a stick fight. I came to the conclusion that once an emotional impulse is aroused and the stimulus continues to be present, the native just drifts along with the impulse and exercises little or any inhibitory power, unless this inhibition is brought about by the evocation of another